

of resort by a train of empty coxcombs, and thereby excluding the man, who perhaps sighs in secret for, and is well enabled to make her happy! Surely such a man would be mad to explain his passion to one, whose favours he sees partook of by such numbers.

When a young female's heart is once opened to pleasure, it is an arduous task to return to the plain paths of virtue: hence it is so many prostitute their charms to support this pride; for when once they enter the roads of pleasure, they dead to retract, and look on a plain tradesman as beneath their notice, though perhaps they have no expectations: that one in a better situation will offer himself on honourable terms.

Reasons like these oblige me to think and wish (without aspiring to be a politician) that the legislature might and ought to adopt some measures to hinder the farther growth of luxury and dress, to keep persons in their proper stations, or, at least to tax all who dressed beyond their rank. By this means, I flatter myself, much money might be raised, as the obliquity of the English would make them dress without controul, even if they suffered otherwise, to enable them to pay the tax.

But I am wandering from my subject: affectation has been productive of the ruin of many, and, I fear, will of many more: be warned, therefore, my fair and amiable countrywomen, in time; be contented with your several stations, and know this truth, that men of sentiment, men of understanding, are best pleased with those charms of nature unadorned by any decorations of art.

I cannot conclude this letter without returning my grateful acknowledgments to the person to whom this and the former are addressed, for his obliging card, to the Editor for his condescending to patronize them, as well as for inserting my pieces in general, (and here I would publicly assure him, I entertain the greatest sense of the favours conferred, and shall ever ac-

knowledge them with gratitude) and also to the author of the letter signed Ophelia, for their writing. I remain the Editor's, as well as

Your very sincere well-wisher,  
And obliged friend,

*Rood-Lane.* G. R\*FF\*Y.

(To be continued.)

#### NATURAL HISTORY of the NIGHTINGALE.

"THE nightingale," says Pliny, "that for fifteen days and nights, hid in the thickest shades, continues her note without intermission, deserves our attention and wonder.—How surprising that so great a voice can reside in so small a body!—Such perseverance in so minute an animal! With what a musical propriety are the sounds it produces modulated!—The note at one time drawn out into a long breath; now stealing off into a different cadence, now interrupted by a break, then changing into a new note by an unexpected transition; now seeming to renew the same strain, then deceiving expectation! She sometimes seems to murmur within herself; full deep, sharp, swift, drawing, trembling; now at the top, the middle, and the bottom of the scale! In short, in that little bill seems to reside all the melody which man has vainly endeavoured to bring from a variety of musical instruments. Some even seem to be possessed of a different song from the rest, and contend with each other with great ardor. The bird overcome is then seen only to discontinue its song with its life."

This bird is somewhat larger than a redstart: in its plumage it resembles the female of that species, but it is of a longer body, and more elegantly formed. The bill is sharp-pointed, like that of the thrush, about half an inch in length, and of a dusky colour; the inside of the mouth is yellow, and the corners of the bill are also yellow,

as in young sparrows : the head, back, and coverts of the wings are of a pale tawny, dashed with olive : the throat, breast, and upper part of the belly are of a light glossy ash colour, but lower near the vent the feathers are white. The tail is near three inches long, and consists of twelve feathers of a deep tawny red ; the rump and feathers that cover the root of the tail are of the same colour. There are eighteen quill feathers in each wing, the exterior webs of which are of a dusky red. The legs and feet are of a flesh colour in some, but in others dusky. The irides of this bird are yellow, and the eyes are remarkably large and piercing. In this species there are no particular marks to distinguish the cock from the hen, though in general it may be observed the colours are more lively in the former.

Though the nightingale has no exterior charms, no beautiful colours to please the eye, though he is not distinguished for the fineness of his dress, and the elegance of his plumage, he has other qualifications to recommend him, other accomplishments which render him truly amiable. The melody of his voice sufficiently compensates for his want of beauty, and no other bird can vie with him in the softness, the strength, the boldness, and the variety of his notes. Though he does not exceed the sparrow in magnitude, he is the loudest warbler of the woods, and the most pleasing of all the grove. Its melody is so soft, and its tuneful transitions so sweet, that it soothes the imagination, agreeably lulls the mind, delights the ear, and wonderfully elevates the hearts of those who listen with attention to its inimitably pleasing strains. Lovers of nature, and those who are fond of retirement in particular, it charms in a peculiar manner, and nothing can afford such soft and innocent music to them who are addicted to solitude and contemplation, as the agreeable trillings of this night-warbling bird.

Philomela (if we may use the poetical epithet) has in all ages been highly esteemed and admired, and almost

every poet mentions it with delight.—Milton was remarkably struck with its melody, and often did his muse invite him to sing of his much-favoured bird : often were the charms of the nightingale the subject of his rapturous theme. In *Paradise Lost*, Book IV. Verse 595, &c. he describes, in a very beautiful and elegant manner, the solemn approach of night, and the sweet warbling of the nocturnal bird.

Now came still evening on, and twilight grey  
Had in her sober livery all things clad ;  
Silence accompany'd for breath and bird,  
They to their grassy couch, these to their nests  
Were sunk, all but the waken'd nightingale ;  
She all night long her am'rous descant sung.

At the consummation of the nuptials of our primordial parents, Milton again introduces his favourite bird to chaunt the marriage song, and all nature seems to exult, all nature seems to concur in expressing her joy at the superlative happiness of the blessed pair !

—The earth  
Gave signs of gratulation, and each hill ;  
Joyous the birds ; fresh gales and gentle airs  
Whisper'd it to the woods, and from their  
wings  
Flung rose, flung odours from the spicy shrub,  
Disporting, till the am'rous bird of night  
Sang spousal, and bid haste the evening star  
On his hill top to light the bridal lamp :  
These lull'd by nightingales embracing slept,  
And on their naked limbs the flow'ry roof  
Strew'd roses, which the morn repair'd.

BOOK VIII. VERSE 510, &c.

This bird is the more valued, because it entertains us when all the rest are silent. It takes its name from *night*, and the Saxon word *galar*, to sing, expressive of the time of its harmony. They begin their song at the approach of eve, and commonly persevere in it the whole night. 'Tis true it sings frequently in the day too when the weather is serene ; but the dusky hour is its favourite season : and when the whole creation is solemn and hushed in silence, methinks its song is more pleasing, and strikes the mind with an agreeable awe and veneration.

When the sable shadows are stretched over the earth, and sober eve succeeds the golden day, delightful is the

soft melody of tureful Philomel! delightful are her harmonious strains to cheer the gloom of night, and animate the solitary groves!—Nothing can be more agreeable to the traveller as he strolls along the darksome glade, or pursues his way through the lonely wood!—The philosopher and the musician listen with equal ardor in the solitary grove, to hear “the sober-suited songstress trill her lay!”—How pleasing when all the tribes of nature, all the families of the earth are buried in sleep; when the linnet and the goldfinch, the blackbird and thrush, the soaring lark, and all the rest of the musical choir have dropt their notes, and are retired to their repose; then how pleasing to walk by the light of the silver moon, and to catch the soft, the sweet modulations of the nightly serenader!—Often at even will I range the dewy mead, and steal along the silent shade, to hear the trilling tale of the mournful warbler.

This inimitable songstress is a great lover of solitude and night. It frequents cool and shady places, and is usually seen in hedge-rows or low bushes, as it delights in no high trees, except the oak. For weeks together, if undisturbed, it will sit upon the same tree, unless when moved to satisfy the calls of hunger. Shakspear, therefore, very properly describes the nightingale sitting nightly in the same place. Singing at night is a peculiarity common to the nightingale only, no other birds found in Great Britain exerting themselves at that season. When it pours its charming notes at this time through the silent vale in the lonely meadow, it is generally found perching in the thickest covert of some large tree or bush, which it seldom leaves till the morning dawns. The same celebrated bard I mentioned before has also touched upon this circumstance—

—As the wakeful bird  
Sings darkling, and in thadiest covert hid,  
Tunes her nocturnal note.

This admirable choirster, the most celebrated of all the feathered tribe, is a regular emigrant. It makes its

appearance in our country about the middle of April, and leaves us in August. Where the nightingale and other small birds of passage retire when they forsake this island, cannot with any certainty be determined. Indisputable it is that they repair to some warmer climate; and to me it seems probable that Spain or the south of France is their winter asylum, as they are absolutely incapable of very distant flights.

I have often observed that the coming of the nightingale is in some measure regulated by the weather, and the state of the season. When the spring has proved forward, it has been seen here in March, and the cock has been heard to sing at the beginning of April, especially toward the evening, when the air has been serene. This present year, the season being remarkably mild, and much forwarder than usual, the nightingale I observed was here before April commenced; and indeed almost all the other birds of passage that visit this island in the spring, were arrived by the middle of that month. On the contrary, when the spring comes late, and is cold and severe, as it sometimes happens, the nightingale, and all our summer birds that annually migrate from one country to another, are retarded in their passage, and are never seen here till the vernal season is very far advanced.

The haunts of the nightingale are chiefly thick hedges, low coppices, and bushes, especially where there are little rivulets, brooks, or streams of water near them: it also delights in solitary groves, sequestered meadows, shady places, and the most retired situations. It usually hides itself in the closest bushes under covert, and consequently is but seldom seen. It is naturally of a shy disposition, and is greatly intimidated at the sight of a man, or any rapacious bird.

In a few days after their arrival in this country they begin to pair, and at this time the cock is more frequent in his song, in order to attract the attention of the female, and allure her to submit to his embraces. In their

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amorous chaces the loudest notes are made use of by the male, the female expressing her consent by a short interrupted twittering. Once paired, the conjugal connection is kept inviolate, and mutually observed with the strictest fidelity for the whole season.

The connubial rites being performed with all imaginable expedition, they begin to construct the mansion for their future progeny. For this purpose the most private and commodious situation is sought for, where they may lay their eggs, and bring up their young in security. Often the male and female on this occasion pass several days before they can find a place proper for their purpose. In general they build their nests at the bottom of hedges, and in small bushes, not far from the ground; and of all the feathered tribe, none secretes it so artfully as the nightingale, which is the reason why their little mansions are so seldom discovered.

Apparently sensible are they that they have many enemies lying in ambush to destroy their rising progeny, and frustrate their laudable intentions. The hawk, the kite, &c. must be guarded against, the malignant ravages of lurking reptiles must be taken care of, and man particularly, their chief invader. This prompts them to exert all their little arts to be secure of danger, and to arm their little household from view amidst the shelter of entangled thorn, and the thick covert of brambles, nettles, &c. Thus situated, thus secreted, it generally escapes the search of its innumerable enemies, and almost always eludes the observation of the school-boy. The female lays five eggs, which are about the size of those of the common sparrow, and of a darkish brown or nutmeg colour.—The nightingale is not delicate in the choice of his materials; a few dried oak leaves form the external part of the nest, and the inside is composed of fibres of roots, soft bents, &c. curiously interwoven. In constructing it they are remarkably industrious, and the nest is usually completed in two or three days. The male provides the materials, but the female is the archi-

tect. These elegant songsters breed in the month of May, and when they come early, sometimes produce twice in a season.

*Market-Laverington.*

J. L.—G.

*(To be concluded in our next.)*

## MILITARY DISTRESS;

O R,

D A M I N V I L L E.

*An ANECDOTE.*

*(Continued from Page 351.)*

MONSIEURIN was returning from the country, where he had passed some months with Daligni and Darnicourt, who were continually empoisoning him. Their attacks were redoubled. They continued in representing Daminville in the blackest lights, they knew the blind-side of the old man. They frequently exclaimed against the prodigality and the extravagance of the young man; and for that purpose invented the most plausible anecdotes: in a word, they were indefatigable, incessant in administering fuel to the hatred which Monsieurin had conceived against the faithful husband of Felicia.

To what inordinate excesses are we driven by the lust for riches! this *ferocious* thirst devoured an inhuman relation, an hypocritical villain. Monsieurin was a slave to one of these tyrants, and Darnicourt to the other.

The only company he had was the perfidious Darnicourt; he received a letter, which the latter knew to be his son's by the writing, and was eager to snatch it from the hands of the old man, and prevent his reading it, saying, "Certainly the intent is to awaken your feelings; you ought to spare yourself the trouble of reading it, for it consists of nothing, but a bundle of lies."

"Let me alone," said Monsieurin, "I am not to be made a chicken of; I am resolved, and I never will give him my pardon."

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looking so serious and solemn, declaring that she hated to have children affect to be what was called womanly. I asked her if the ladies had learnt French; and if they had an ear for music. To the first question, she replied, that they ought, in her opinion, to know how to speak English plainly, before they began to learn any other language: the second, she answered, by saying that music was above the capacity of such children; desiring I would keep them close to their needles, and to let them read, now and then, a chapter in the Bible, and mind their spelling; adding, that they should be taught to write when they were old enough.

With the last gracious promise Mrs. Gaskins left us together.

No sooner was she gone than the two sisters came up to me, welcomed me to the house, and said they should be quite glad to have somebody with them who would prevail on their mamma to let them have gowns, handkerchiefs, and heels to their shoes; and to let them turn up their hair.

(To be continued.)

## NATURAL HISTORY of the NIGHT-INGALE.

(Continued from Page 405.)

IT has been asserted by many reputable naturalists, both antient and modern, that the nightingale never sings near its nest, for fear of its being discovered by that means; but I will beg leave to affirm from a long course of observation and experience in ornithology, (which indeed for many years past has been my chief study,\*

\* As the generality of naturalists, and particularly those who have wrote on ornithology, have been too credulous and inaccurate, and abound with errors, the author of the above, to obviate these inconveniences, has, with great application and indefatigable study and industry, composed a *Natural History of British Birds* on a new plan, i.e. by a strict attention to nature herself, without regard to any thing said by others on the subject. Such a work can want no recommendation, as it must be valuable to every one who would wish

and principal amusement) that it always sits and sings not far from the spot where all its affections are centered; and any one who is curious enough to search the hedge-row where it delivers its music, will frequently find the nest near

to acquire some proficiency in this delightful and pleasing department of natural history. The author of this performance has not like his predecessors and contemporaries, clandestinely copied the mistakes of preceding writers; but to make it as perfect as possible, has absolutely been at the trouble and expence of procuring almost every bird he has mentioned, and so taken an exact description: he has also been at the pains of examining the nest, eggs, &c. of each species, and made many new discoveries with relation to their nestlings, never before taken notice of. Throughout the whole great care has likewise been taken to clear up the faults, and rectify the mistakes, to correct the blunders, and explode the errors of former writers; who, instead of copying nature, and representing things with justness, plainness, and perspicuity, have, too often added from their own imaginations, and imposed on the reader scarce any thing but fables, fictitious stories, and chimerical absurdities. The works of the ancients, particularly that of Aldrovandus, Pliny, Aristotle, Gesner, &c. &c. are replete with such dry extraneous matter and impertinent stuff, as is really disgusting to a serious reader; the moderns also are in some measure culpable, as they too frequently transcribe them, and again confirm what the ancients imprudently, and without sufficient testimony asserted. Johnson, Ray, Edwards, Abin, Brookes, Pennant, and many other of our modern celebrated naturalists, have, for want of sufficient observation, diligence, and experience, mentioned many things in respect to birds, contrary to fact and real truth, which I shall make appear hereafter. † Thus one of them tells us in his description of the cuckoo, that it builds a nest like other birds with thorns, long grass, hay, &c. hatches, and brings up its young. The same author informs us that the water-wagtail is a bird of passage, and is never seen in this country in winter—that the crow, the raven, and the pie, like the rapacious tribe, kill and eat small birds—that the white owl has a hooting note, and never appears in moon light evenings, all which assertions are certainly false, as must be obvious to every one who is the least conversant in this part of natural history. Another modern writer would make us believe that the jay builds in holes of trees, and is a carnivorous bird. The mistle thrush, if we credit this author, lays eggs like those of the thrush,

† Viz. in my Ornithology.

near the place where the male is stationed. Like the wood lark and most others of the small bird tribe, the cock of this species is very frequent in his song during the time of incubation. The reason of birds being more constant in singing at this period, is to soothe and delight the female whilst sitting: it is also supposed to be a signal

of safety to inform her that no danger is near.

The nightingale sits about fourteen or fifteen days; and such is her patience and perseverance, that neither the calls of hunger nor the approach of danger can force her from her nest. She is often visited by the male, who brings her a supply of food, and sometimes for a little while relieves her in the work of incubation. Agreeable to this are the sentiments of my favourite author Thompson, for thus sings that excellent, that much admired poet,

—“The patient dam assiduous sits,  
Not to be tempted from her tender task,  
Or by sharp hunger or by smooth delight,  
Tho’ the whole loosen’d spring around her  
blows.  
Her sympathising lover takes his stand  
High on the opposite bank, and ceaseless  
sings  
The tedious time away; or else supplies  
her place a moment, while the sudden flies  
To pick the scanty meal.”

By observing therefore attentively the place where the nightingale sings, you will probably discover the nest, for the female is usually in the same hedge, or however not far off: but if after diligent search you cannot find it, make use of this expedient. Stick two or three meal worms or caterpillars on the thorns near the place where the old ones frequent, and carefully observe which way they carry them, and you will hear the cry of the young, the old ones also will make a great ado, flutter around you with dishevelled wings, and incessantly exert themselves in a kind of mournful note or plaintive strain when you approach the nest.

When you have found the nest, if the young ones are not fledged they must not be touched, for if they are taken out of the nest, they will never continue there afterwards, as they will be anxious to leap out, or the old ones will entice them away. The young should be twelve or fourteen days old before they are taken, and though at first they will be apt to refuse their meat, yet when they are forcibly fed for a few days, they will soon voluntarily take their food. They should

and is a fine song bird: the fly-catcher, he informs us, builds its nest in low bushes, and lays blue eggs, which I suppose must be meant of the hedge-sparrow: the common warbler, he tells us, lays sixteen, and sometimes twenty eggs at a time, and the long-tail tunesome fourteen; and it is his opinion that the timorous tribe emigrate, and that there is a great analogy between the note of the common, and the golden-crowned wren. Indeed it would be an endless task to point out all the mistakes that are to be met with in authors who have woe on this subject. It is evident that they could have but an imperfect knowledge of ornithology, and were obliged to copy from others, who probably themselves wrote from speculation, and not from experience. In the work itself, the reader will find I have been very particular in this point, and have advanced nothing but what is real truth, and will bear the strictest examination. I will not, however, presume to say that it is absolutely perfect; but I think I may with propriety—with justice assert, that it will be found more complete and more accurate than any other history of British birds that has yet appeared in our language.

Tho’ I have taken the liberty to point out a few mistakes in the above mentioned writers, far be it from me to depreciate their labours: their works are truly valuable, and of great worth to the public. There are however many errors and many inaccuracies which want rectification in the writings of almost all our natural historians. It were therefore sincerely to be wished, that the naturalists would write with more exactness, more faithfulness and precision, as nothing is more rare than to find accuracy in their descriptions, novelty in their account of facts, or delicacy in their observations.

The author of this new performance has taken care not to spit upon this rock, nothing is asserted inconsistent with reason, or incompatible with truth: he has had a strict regard to facts, and endeavoured to be accurate, particular, and copious in all his observations, &c. and at the same time as interesting as possible.

This work will be ready for publication in a few months: those, therefore, who are desirous of being possessed of a complete and entertaining History of British Birds, may then purchase it at a very reasonable price, as the bulk of the whole work, according to the best calculations, will not exceed two volumes in octavo.

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be covered up warm, kept very clean, and fed regularly every two hours from morning till night. The best food for them in this premature state, is raw flesh, which should be minced very fine, and mixed with a small quantity of hard boiled egg. As soon as they are capable of feeding themselves, put each into a single cage, at the bottom of which should be some soft kind of stuff, such as wool, hay, or dry moss. When they are full grown they should have ants mould, and sometimes a few meal worms or caterpillars may be given them. Particular care should be taken that they are kept clean, for otherwise they will have the cramp, and perhaps their claws will drop off: the perches in the cage should be covered with green baize, or some such thing. In moulting time they will sometimes neglect their food for a week or a fortnight, which is a disorder peculiar to these birds: a few spiders given them two or three times a week, or a little saffron mixed with their water, is said to be effectual in removing this malady. Figs chopped small among their meat will produce the same effect, and make them recover their flesh. Give them fresh meat every day in the summer, for it will greatly injure them if it be either stale or sour.

When young, there are no infallible marks to distinguish the cocks from the hens; but in old birds I have observed the colours of the male are more vivid and bright than those of the female: however, by their singing a distinction may be made with facility.—In a state of confinement, the nightingale will sing seven or eight months in the year, viz. from the beginning of November till Midsummer ensuing.—They are very tender birds, and it requires infinite pains to preserve them in captivity.

Old nightingales taken in the spring sometimes prove very valuable. These may easily be caught with lime twigs, or with trap-cages baited with meal-worms. The birds taken before the latter end of April are always to be preferred, because *Google* after the cocks

pair with the hens. The haunts of the male should be first discovered, and the trap-cage should be placed as near the spot where the bird sings as possible. Before you fix the snare turn up the earth a little, which will tempt them to look there for food, and lime-twigs may also be placed in the hedge at the same time, with a few meal-worms stuck at proper places to draw them into the snare.

As soon as you have taken them, their wings should be gently tied, to prevent their fluttering and beating themselves against the cage, which should be placed against a window, and covered over, that the sight of any object may not disturb or intimidate them.—At first he should be fed with sheep's-heart and egg mixed very fine, and it is necessary to give him, at intervals, other food, which when wild they feed on, such as small worms, caterpillars, and other insects. If the bird is fullen, and will not eat, take him in your hand, and force open his bill, giving him the insects, or four or five bits of food as big as peas, to entice him to eat. His common food should always be minced with ants, that when he picks up the ants, he may pick up some of that with them. When you perceive him take to his meat voluntarily, give him less ants in it, and finally nothing but sheep's-heart and egg; for unless you accustom him to this diet, he will die inevitably at the approach of winter, when insects can no longer be found.

In the autumnal season, nightingales will sometimes grow so enormously fat, as to endanger their lives. Therefore when they get flesh too fast, they should be frequently purged, and two or three speckled spiders should be given them every day. When their legs are gouty, they should be anointed with lard, fresh butter, or capon's grease, three or four days together. If they grow melancholy, put a little liquorice or sugar-candy in their water. Sometimes they are subject to apoplexies and breakings out about the eyes and bill; for these complaints you should also make use of butter or capon's fat. Be sure

